

MEMO

To: Members of the California Child Welfare Council
CC: Secretary Diane Dooley
Justice Vance Raye
From: Kathryn Icenhower, Co-Chair
Will Lightbourne, Co-Chair
On behalf of the CWC Prevention/Early Intervention Subcommittee
Date: June 10, 2011
Re: Differential Response Framework for California

Message

The Prevention/Early Intervention (P/EI) Committee has focused its recommendations on a requirement for taking promising practices to scale¹. The committee has specifically recommended that California commit, over a reasonable time horizon, to bring Differential Response to scale on a statewide basis. Differential Response is an evidence-based approach to preventing child abuse and neglect by ensuring child safety through expanding the ability of child welfare agencies to respond to reports of child maltreatment. To date, Differential Response has been implemented in varying degrees in several California counties, offering a broad set of strategies for working with families at the first signs of trouble. This has included innovative partnerships with community based organizations that can help meaningfully support families who are at-risk for child maltreatment, and could potentially otherwise enter the child welfare system.

At this time, the P/EI Committee has determined that a Differential Response (DR) Framework, adopted statewide, could increase consistency and model fidelity in DR implementation, while still optimizing local flexibility. At the June CWC meeting comments and input will be invited.

¹ Promoting consistent program and judicial excellence across counties to the greatest extent possible while recognizing the demographic, geographic, and financial differences among the counties. WIC section 16540(c).